DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 108 264 CS 501 064

AUTHOR Leckenby, John D.; Surlin, Stuart H.
TITLE Race and Social Class Differences in Perceived Reality of Socially Relevant Television Programs for Adults in Atlanta and Chicago.
PUB DATE Apr 75
NOTE 26p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the International Communication Association (Chicago, April, 1975)

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.76 HC-$1.95 PLUS POSTAGE
DESCRIPTORS Audiences; Higher Education; Lower Class; Middle Class; *Racial Differences; Racial Discrimination; *Role Perception; *Social Attitudes; *Television Research; *Television Viewing
IDENTIFIERS All in the Family; Sanford and Son

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to determine the amount of social information received by audiences viewing "Sanford and Son" and "All in the Family." It was hypothesized that whites perceive "Sanford and Son" as being more real than blacks do; middle-class viewers rate each program as being more real than lower-class viewers; lower-class viewers perceive the racial viewpoints expressed on the two programs as being more representative of each race than do middle-class audiences; viewers in the Southeast perceive the stereotypes expressed in the two shows as being representative of the respective races; and lower-class viewers approve of the marriage relationship of Archie and Edith more than do middle-class viewers, while middle-class viewers approve of the marriage relationship of Michael and Gloria more than do lower-class viewers. The samples obtained from Atlanta and Chicago were selected on the basis of data from the 1970 United States Census Tract for those cities. The results of this study are presented in narrative and table format. (RB)

****
* Documents acquired by ERIC include many informal unpublished *
* materials not available from other sources. ERIC makes every effort *
* to obtain the best copy available. nevertheless, items of marginal *
* reproducibility are often encountered and this affects the quality *
* of the microfiche and hardcopy reproductions ERIC makes available *
* via the ERIC Document Reproduction Service (EDRS). EDRS is not *
* responsible for the quality of the original document. Reproductions *
* supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made from the original. *
****

ED108264

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH,
EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF
EDUCATION
THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"Race and Social Class Differences in Perceived Reality of Socially Relevant Television Programs for Adults in Atlanta and Chicago"*

by

John D. Leckenby
College of Communications
University of Illinois
at Urbana-Champaign
Urbana, Illinois 61801

and

Stuart H. Surlin
School of Journalism
University of Georgia
Athens, Georgia 30602

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS COPYRIGHTED MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

John D. Leckenby
Stuart H. Surlin

TO ERIC AND ORGANIZATIONS OPERATING UNDER AGREEMENTS WITH THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION. FURTHER REPRODUCTION OUTSIDE THE ERIC SYSTEM REQUIRES PERMISSION OF THE COPYRIGHT OWNER."

Paper presented at International Communication Association Convention
Mass Communication Division, Chicago, Illinois
April, 1975

CS 501 064

*The authors wish to thank the University of Illinois Research Board, the Survey Research Laboratory, University of Illinois, and the University of Georgia for financial aid and technical support of this project as well as students in the Fall 1974 Mass Communication Research class at the University of Georgia.

PROBLEM

A television viewer, or any user of the mass media, brings a conglomeration of prior beliefs, attitudes, and experiences to the immediate mass media experience. In turn, the immediate media experience becomes a part of the individual and is carried to the next social experience. Thus, mediated information symbolically interpreted by the individual either alters or reinforces the individual's perceptions of his environment.

Critics have relentlessly warned against the potentially harmful effects the mass media may have on our society. Recently, the argument centers on the negative social effects of the mass media. Mass media users could very well be learning how to socially behave, as well as learning the "proper" attitudes and beliefs they should accept about themselves and other individuals or groups in our society, and in other societies past, present, and future.

Recently, systematic social science research has been delving into the social effects of the mass media. The present study examines how race and social class characteristics affect the viewers' perception of television programs which purport to present a "slice-of-life" approach to entertainment programming. The two programs chosen as the focus of attention in this paper present in a humorous context, content which deals with current social issues affecting our society. One show contains a majority of white actors, "All in the Family", and the other contains a majority of black actors, "Sanford and Son". Likewise, both are rated highly in the Nielsen television ratings, and are produced by Tandem Productions (with Bud Yorkin and Norman Lear the "tandem" creators of the programs).

The authors believe that receiving viewer responses to these programs will produce insight into the potential amount of social information received by viewing these programs. The precise type of social information learned will also be tapped. Likewise, the possible difference in social information perceived by two regionally diverse metropolitan samples will also be pursued.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH AND CONCEPTUAL BASE

The television industry is uncomfortably aware of the role it plays in affecting the social images held by individuals in our society. The writers and actors themselves are beginning to speak out on their perceptions of the effects resulting from their professional pursuits. Redd Foxx, the black comedian who portrays Fred Sanford, the highly traditional and dogmatic father in "Sanford and Son", recently stated that "the scripts were slowly but surely leaning toward Uncle Tom and Amos 'n' Andy."[1]

A black writer of another Tandem Productions black-oriented comedy, "Good Times", gives one an insight into the conflict facing him, "...Lear's shows are looked at in only two ways - 'Is that really what blacks are like? And that is not really what blacks are like." Speaking about "Good Times", "...This show is not the image of black people. We don't claim to be representative of all black people - that's too much to be and it's not my responsibility."[2]

Likewise, the problem of which social images should be projected in a television program dealing with racial issues is not limited to the way blacks or whites view it. A black actor, Bernie Casey, is cognizant of the social class aspect of the issue. He states, "The problems we as black people in the world of television face is that the people who run television by-and-large are a pretty fair representation of the middle-class American mentality and, therefore, they cater to what they think the middle-class American taste is."[3]

The white performers in "All in the Family", especially Carroll O'Connor, who plays the character of "Archie" as a highly dogmatic father and husband, are

personally affected by their characterizations. O'Connor admitted that he dislikes being approached by viewers who identify with "Archie" and thank him "for telling the truth for a change."[4]

Concurrently, social critics have expressed concern over the social images projected by "All in the Family". John Slawson observes that, "As citizens, it is our responsibility to curb the influences that produce bigoted attitudes and discriminatory behavior, but we should not condone their expression even if it be by implication. And this is what 'All in the Family' unwittingly does. It has the potential of producing a 'halo effect'. 'It's in our blood. We all seem to have it in one form or another; so what?"[5]

Thus, the issues evolve around the "supposed insights" into the black life-style and the "condoning or legitimizing" of bigoted or highly dogmatic approaches to social problem solving. The question remains as to whether or not there are any antecedent group characteristics, such as race, social class, geographical region of residence, personality characteristics, etc., which affect perception of these issues and affect subsequent beliefs as well as behavior.

Psychological characteristics have been systematically studied in relation to these issues. Vidmar and Rokeach used degree of prejudice as a differentiating variable and stated that, "Many persons did not see the program as a satire on bigotry and that these persons were more likely to be viewers who scored high on measures of prejudice. Even more important is the finding that high prejudiced persons were likely to watch 'All in the Family' more often than low prejudiced persons, to identify more often with Archie Bunker, and to see him winning in the end. All such findings seem to suggest that the program is more likely reinforcing prejudice and racism than combating it."[6] An extensive footnote to their larger "All in the Family" study relates to findings received from a smaller study dealing with the characters in "Sanford and Son". Respondents were asked to choose

the black character in the program which is more typical of blacks in general, Fred or Lamont; Lamont is Fred's son who is portrayed as more modern and low-dogmatic in his approach to life and social problem solving than is Fred. The authors state, "As expected, high prejudiced persons were significantly more likely ($p < .01$) than low prejudiced persons to name Sanford than to name Lamont or refuse to answer."[7]

Surlin dealt with dogmatism on the part of the viewer, and viewer "liking and agreement" with Archie on "All in the Family." Highly dogmatic viewers were more apt to "like" and "agree" with Archie. Based on cognitive consistency theory, Surlin concludes that "...the potential for 'liking' and 'agreement' polarization by high-dogmatic individuals is highly probable through continued exposure to Archie on 'All in the Family.'"[8]

There is a complete lack of data concerning the effect of race, social class, and region on the perception of these shows. Related research findings have used race as it relates to the perception of black characters and the roles they portray in television programming and advertising.[9] Also, investigations have employed race, implied social class (based on residence), amount of television viewing, and personal interracial contact as the basis for one's attitudes toward blacks.[10] It was found in the latter mentioned study that, "Television provided the most information about how blacks looked, talked, and dressed for the rural youngsters....TV exposure to blacks for white children contributed to identification with blacks and black-featured shows; personal exposure did not. Television exposure contributed to beliefs that TV blacks are real to life; personal contacts did not."[11]

Prior findings, and commonly held beliefs, lead one to expect in the current study that: (1) whites will perceive the black program "Sanford and Son" to be more real than will blacks, (2) middle class viewers will rate each program as being more real than will lower class viewers, (3) lower class viewers

(who tend to be higher authoritarian) will perceive the racial viewpoints expressed on the two programs to be more truly representative of the people of each race than will the middle class viewers, (4) viewers residing in the southeastern United States will perceive the racial viewpoints expressed on the two programs to be more truly representative of the people of each race than will viewers residing in the middle-western United States, and (5) the lower class viewer will approve of the marriage relationship of Archie and Edith (a high authoritarian male-female relationship) on "All in the Family" more than will middle class viewers, and visa versa for the marriage relationship between Michael and Gloria on "All in the Family."

METHOD

The procedures involved in obtaining the samples to be studied were equivalent for the Atlanta and Chicago phases of the study. Each selection began with data obtained from the 1970 United States Census Tract for the respective cities. The tracts were perused and eight census tracts were selected in Atlanta and four in Chicago. These were selected on the basis of the type of racial composition and income figures which were desired for the testing of hypotheses in the study. The tracts were matched, as early as possible, on the basis of race and income/location (the social class indicator). In Atlanta, three tracts contained a high percentage of blacks (80% to 97%) with middle level incomes based upon the median level for that tract ($10,933 to $14,275). Two tracts in Atlanta contained a high percentage of whites(98% to 99%) and middle level incomes ($10,941 to $14,584). One tract was low income ($6,102) and racially mixed (53% black, 47% white). One tract was low income ($6,559) with a high percentage of blacks (99%), and one low income ($6,449) with a high percentage of whites. The residential areas for the tracts were matched by degree of desirability for each racial and income level subgroup.

In the Chicago sampling procedure, four tracts were selected. One was

predominantly black (92%) and moderate in median income ($9,071); another was also predominantly black (94%) but low income ($5,345). One white tract (99%) in Chicago had median income of a moderate level ($9,258) while the other white tract (90% white concentration) had low median income ($5,420).

The selected tracts were outlined on the respective city street maps. The streets which were contained within each selected tract were listed. Through the use of a street-ordered telephone directory, telephone numbers were selected. The middle class, black subgroup was oversampled in Atlanta in order to assure an adequate sample for analysis in the current study, and as a basis for comparison for data currently being collected as part of a new investigation in a similar area.

In the Atlanta phase, telephone interviews were completed by ten student interviewers personally trained by one of the authors. The data were collected during a week period in the month of July, 1974, at the same time the interviewers were students in the author's Mass Communication Research class at the University of Georgia. Completed interviews were conducted with blacks, n=175; with whites, n=103; with middle class individuals, n=188; and lower class individuals, n=90. The total Atlanta sample was n=278. The proportion of social class to race subgroupings was not significantly different based upon chi-square analysis: middle, blacks, n=115; middle, whites, n=73; low, blacks, n=60; and low, whites, n=30.

In the Chicago portion of the study, telephone interviews were conducted by experienced interviewers of the Survey Research Laboratory at the University of Illinois; each interviewer was trained in terms of the demands of the questionnaire employed. Interviewing was conducted for a three-week period during November, 1974. Interviews were completed with middle income blacks, n=66, middle income whites, n=49; low income blacks, n=59; and low income whites, n=51. There

were in total, (Atlanta nad Chicago) the following sample sizes for each of the subgroupings upon which the analysis in the study is based: middle, blacks, n=181; middle, whites, n=122; low, black, n=119, and low, whites, n=81. The total number of subjects in the study is N=503.

The responses analyzed in this report are taken from a larger questionnaire completed in the interview. However, the entier interview was completed within approximately ten minutes. The completion rate was approximately 70% in Atlanta and 94% in Chicago of the contacted subjects. Interviewers did not report any degree of animosity toward the questions by respondents. The interviewers in both cities found the respondents eager to give their response and the reasoning for the response. In the Atlanta interviewing phase, two black students were trained for the interview and conducted approximately thirty interviews; analysis of responses and comments of the black interviewers verified that the race of the interviewer was not a significant factor in the responses offered by interviewees in the study.

The questions analyzed in this paper dealt with, first, the concept of the perceived reality of the characters depicted in each program under study: "The program ("Sanford and Son") ("All in the Family") reveals how people really behave in their daily life"; second, the reality of racial attitudes held by each race: "The program ("Sanford and Son") ("All in the Family") really shows how most (blacks/whites, respectively) feel about (whites/blacks, respectively)"; and third, the personal acceptance of marriage roles depicted on "All in the Family":"(Archie and Edith) (Mike and Gloria)in "All in the Family," present a proper example for the way a husband and wife should treat each other." Each response to each statement was elicited upon a five-interval, Likert-like scale ranging from "Strongly Agree" ("1") to "Strongly Disagree" ("5"). A filter question assured that each respondent was an actual viewer of both programs.

In addition to analyses based upon race and social class subgroupings, a question asked concerning the concept of alienation will also be examined here.

FINDINGS

Perceived Reality of Behavior

Three-way analysis of variance reveals a social class by region interaction ($p < .01$), a race by region interaction ($p < .05$), as well as the three-way interaction of social class, race, and region ($p < .01$). The higher order interaction effect shows that low class, white, Atlantans are in significantly greater agreement that "Sanford and Son" reveals how people, particularly blacks, really behave in their daily life than any of the other combinations of the predictor variables. Middle class, white, Atlantans, on the other hand, are the least accpeting of this reality concept. Blacks of either social class in both Atlanta and Chicago are no different in their perceptions; disregarding social class, however, Atlanta blacks are less accepting of this reality concept than Chicago blacks as shown in the two-way interaction of race and region (see Table #1).

Three-way analysis of variance also reveals an interaction of social class, race and region ($p < .01$) concerning the perceived "reality" of the behavior by characters in "All in the Family" (see Table #2). For this program, middle class, black, Chicagoans are most accepting of the reality of the characters in the program. Low class, black Atlantans; and low class, white Chicagoans similarly respond in a close-to-neutral manner while low class, white Atlantans; middle class, black Atlantans; and middle class, white Chicagoans similarly agree that the program presents real behavior. The least agreement with the perceived reality of the characters in the program is shown by middle income, white, Atlantans.

Perceived Reality of Racial Attitudes

There is a significant interaction effect of race and region in terms of the

perceived reality of racial attitudes expressed by the predominantly black characters in "Sanford and Son" ($p < .01$). Table #3 shows that white Atlantans are significantly more in agreement that "Sanford and Son" really shows how blacks feel about whites ($\bar{x} = 2.8$) than black Chicagoans ($\bar{x} = 3.0$), white Chicagoans ($\bar{x} = 3.1$), or black Atlantans ($\bar{x} = 3.4$). There is also a significant difference between blacks and whites regardless of region of residence ($p < .01$). Whites agree significantly more than do blacks that "Sanford and Son" shows how blacks really feel about whites. There was no significant effect of social class by itself or in combination with the other predictor variable.

Table #4 shows a significant interaction effect of social class, race, and region in terms of respondents extent of agreement that "All in the Family" shows how whites feel about blacks ($p < .05$). Low class, black Chicagoans and low class, white Atlantans are most in agreement with this concept ($\bar{x} = 2.9$ and $\bar{x} = 2.8$, respectively) along with middle class, white and middle class, black Chicagoans ($\bar{x} = 2.9$ and $\bar{x} = 2.9$, respectively). These groups are significantly different from middle class, black Atlantans ($\bar{x} = 3.1$), middle class, white Atlantans ($\bar{x} = 3.2$), low class, black Atlantans ($\bar{x} = 3.3$), and low class, white Chicagoans ($\bar{x} = 3.2$).

It should be noted that, overall, the respondents were neutral in their ratings of the reality of the racial attitudes expressed in both programs. "All in the Family" was rated slightly more real in expressing the racial attitudes of whites than "Sanford and Son" was in expressing black racial attitudes ($\bar{x} = 3.05$ and $\bar{x} = 3.09$, respectively).

Acceptance of Marriage Roles

Table #5 shows that there are significant differences between low class ($\bar{x} = 3.5$) and middle class ($\bar{x} = 3.7$) respondents in terms of their acceptance of the marriage model typified by Archie and Edith on "All in the Family" ($p < .05$).

Also, blacks agreed more so than whites that Archie and Edith present a proper marriage role model ($p < .01$). Blacks were neutral in their rating ($\bar{x} = 3.4$) while whites disagreed that this marriage role is proper ($\bar{x} = 3.8$). There is also a social class by region interaction effect ($p < .01$) with low class Atlantans agreeing most ($\bar{x} = 3.3$) and middle class Atlantans agreeing least ($\bar{x} = 3.9$). A race by region interaction effect is also shown in Table #5 ($p < .05$). Black Chicagoans agree significantly more that Archie and Edith present a proper marriage than do white Atlantans ($\bar{x} = 3.2$ and $\bar{x} = 3.7$, respectively). On the whole, the respondents disagree that Archie and Edith present a proper marriage model ($\bar{x} = 3.6$).

Considering all subjects, there is considerably more agreement that Mike and Gloria on "All in the Family" present a proper marriage model ($\bar{x} = 2.8$) compared to that shown for Archie and Edith above. Though there are no main effect differences here, there is a race by region interaction ($p < .01$) and a three-way interaction of the predictor variables ($p < .01$) as shown in Table #6. The higher order interaction shows that low class, black Chicagoans, low class, white Atlantans, and middle class, black Chicagoans agree significantly more that Mike and Gloria portray a proper marriage model ($\bar{x} = 2.6$, $\bar{x} = 2.5$, and $\bar{x} = 2.5$, respectively) than do low class, black Atlantans and low class, white Chicagoans ($\bar{x} = 3.1$) who show a neutral and identical level of agreement - disagreement.

ANALYSES AND CONCLUSIONS

Based upon previous findings the authors expected whites to percieve "Sanford and Son" as more "real" than would blacks; this was not the case as Table #1 shows. Low class, white Atlantans perceived the show as "real" while low class, white Chicagoans and middle class, white Atlantans did not. Again, going against expectations, middle class respondents were no more apt to accept the reality of the researched programs than were lower class respondents when race and region are not taken into account. Also, the authors expected lower class respondents, regardless of racial and regional characteristics, to accept the racial presentations

on each program to a greater degree than middle class respondents. No such main effects were found. Further, there were no interaction effects involving social class with respect to the racial viewpoints presentation concept. The authors also predicted a greater acceptance of the Archie-Edith marriage relationship by low class respondents than by middle class respondents, and vise versa for the Michael-Gloria marriage relationship. This prediction held for the Archie-Edith relationship but not for the Michael-Gloria relationship. Finally, there was no difference in acceptance of the racial characterizations on each of the programs in terms of region of residence of the respondents. Clearly, regional differences do exist but these exert themselves in combination with social class and/or racial differences. There was a regional interaction effect in every concept analyzed in the study.

As a whole, previous research in this area was not helpful in predicting the outcome of the findings of this study. The main reason for this failure has been the lack of prior research which has looked at multivariate analysis of viewer perceptions. Likewise, a socio-psychological theory which integrates viewer characteristics, societal variables, and culture in a way which will better predict the perception and effect of mass communication is lacking. It is clear that by looking at social class and racial characteristics of the television viewer a consistent pattern of responses developed.

An examination of mean scores at the three-way interaction level shows a definite pattern of responses. Lower class, black Atlantans and lower class, white Chicagoans are very similar in the levels of their responses and tend toward neutrality or disagreement with most of the concepts examined. More agreeable to the concepts are low class, black Chicagoans and low class, white Atlantans who are very similar in terms of mean scores on the concepts. Between each of these are the middle class, black Atlantans and middle class, white Chicagoans; the similarity, however, between their responses is not as great as

in the former two cases. Middle class, white Atlantans and middle class, black Chicagoans do not display a pattern in the above sense as Table #1-6 demonstrate.

In order to comprehend these effects more clearly, a three-way analysis of variance was conducted upon a specific dimension of the alienation concept which was tapped in the questionnaire.[12] These results are shown in Table #7. The dimension examined is the feeling of "powerlessness" on the part of the respondents. There is a race by region interaction effect ($p < .05$) which shows the identical pattern observed on the responses to program concepts by these subgroups. The low class, black Atlantans and low class, white Chicagoans are similar in levels of powerlessness ($\bar{x} = 2.8$ and $\bar{x} = 2.9$, respectively) as are low class, black Chicagoans/low class, white Atlantans ($\bar{x} = 2.4$ and $\bar{x} = 2.5$, respectively) as well as middle class, black Atlantans/middle class, white Chicagoans ($\bar{x} = 2.7$ for each). The product-moment correlation of "powerlessness" with each of the six concepts relating to the television programs examined ranges from $r = .11$ to $r = .24$, this range indicating significance at the .05 level with $N = 503$. Though coefficients of this magnitude may be expected in subsequent samples, this magnitude does indicate acceptable levels of exploratory power.

In order to examine the stability of the correlations indicated above across the subgroups where patterns of response were shown, a one-way analysis of covariance was conducted for each of the six program concepts of interest where the single covariate was "powerlessness". These results are shown in Table #3 and demonstrate that the strength of correlation of each program concept response and the powerlessness response is constant across the three groups utilized in the analysis: (1) low class, black Atlantans/low class, white Chicagoans; (2) low class, black Chicagoans/low class, white Atlantans; and (3) middle class, black Atlantans/middle class, white Chicagoans. In all but one instance, the hypothesis of homogeneity of regression cannot be rejected. The analysis of covariance, therefore, is equivalent to a test of the difference in responses on each program concept where the

groups are defined in terms of the level of powerlessness as this differs across the groups. Though the strength of relationship within each of the above groups between powerlessness and each of the program concepts is constant across these three groups, the responses to the program concepts are significantly different by groups defined in terms of the mean magnitude of the feeling of powerlessness. This is shown for each of the six concepts in Table #8 under the analysis of covariance heading. The significance of differences on the concepts between these three groups which differ in levels of alienation (powerlessness dimension) requires an interpretation.

Of the three groups considered above, low class, black Atlantans and low class, white Chicagoans are lowest in feelings of powerlessness. It can be pointed out, since power indicates political matters, that Atlanta has a black mayor and has been considered a major triumph for blacks in the Southeast. There is also little doubt that low class whites in Chicago identify a "man on their side" in mayor Daley; he is a symbol of lower class whites, or the "little man's" man. In short, these two groups can identify with those in power positions. On the other hand, the low class blacks of Chicago and the low class whites of Atlanta, who are high in feelings of powerlessness, suggest a different tie to political symbolism. The low class black in Chicago has no such elected figure of power to identify with as does his counterpart in Atlanta. Also, the low class white of Atlanta must be reminded of his heritage of "poor white trash" and the policies of politicians with respect to integration in recent years. These individuals have a history of alienation from the central power structure in the South.

Thus, the similarity within low class, black Atlantans/low class, white Chicagoans and low class, black Chicagoans/low class, white Atlantans to the responses indicates that similar socio-psychological characteristics on the part of these demographically different subgroups have possibly influenced their response pattern. Reference group theory, and the specific concept of "relative

deprivation" could conceivably explain this pattern.[13]

The middle class black and lower class white individuals in the above groups have been historically considered the "marginal men" in our middle class, white dominated society. One would hypothesize that their unique perspective would affect their perceptions of society projected through television programming.

The logic of this hypothesis develops from the belief that the "marginal man" viewer, through a lack of self confidence in his ability to know what really happens in the middle class, white dominated society, along with his desires to fully partake in this society, will be more apt to accept the reality of television programs. This phenomenon is the most potentially damaging when these television programs deal with characters which express strong stereotyped attitudes about race relations and marriage relationships.

Another unfortunate aspect of this program content-viewer relationship is that defensive personality characteristics exhibited by the "marginal man" such as high authoritarianism, low internal locus of control of one's environment, high dogmatism, etc., works to keep the viewer from allowing himself a more well-rounded perception of his environment, thus keeping him from coping with the "real" society within which he exists. The impact of the "ersatz reality" may be heightened for these people. The findings in this study suggests that the "marginal man" concept is differentially predictive based upon the cultural/political environment within which the "marginal man" finds himself.

One must conclude that consistent with the warnings issued by previous researchers, a socio-psychological analysis of viewers and their acceptance of "reality" as projected through television programs dealing with social issues (in this case "All in the Family" and "Sanford and Son") reveals that these shows are heightening their inability to cope with society. Likewise, this study highlights the need for a comprehensive socio-psychological theory which can effectively predict the perception of television content by viewers so that

changes can be made in future programming which will have the greatest pro-social effects. Reference Group Theory may be the most predictive of television programming effects. Future hypotheses will be based upon this approach as well as further investigation into the dimensions of alienation as an indicator of the "marginal man's" status with respect to television programming.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Durant, Celeste. "Amos-Andy Legacy Haunts TV Industry." The Atlanta Journal and Constitution, October 20, 1974.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Newsweek. "TV: Speaking About The Unspeakable." November 29, 1971, 52-60.

[5]Slawson, John. "How Funny Can Bigotry Be?" Educational Broadcasting Review, 6:2, April, 1972, 79-82.

[6]Vidmar, Neil and Rokeach, Milton. "Archie Bunker's Bigotry: A Study in Selective Perception and Exposure." Journal of Communication, 24:1, Winter 1974, 36-47.

[7]Ibid.

[8]Surlin, Stuart H. "Bigotry on Air and in Life: The Archie Bunker Case." Public Telecommunications Review, 2:2, April 1974, 34-41.

[9]Dominick, Joseph R. and Greenberg, Bradley S. "Three Seasons of Blacks on Television." Journal of Advertising Research, 10:2, April 1970, 21-27; Roberts, Churchill. "The Portrayal of Blacks on Network Television." Journal of Broadcasting, 15:1, Winter 1970-71, 45-53; Kassarjian, Waltraud. "Blacks as Communicators and Interpreters of Mass Communication." Journalism Quarterly, 50:2, Spring 1973, 285-291+.

[10]Greenberg, Bradley S. "Children's Reactions to TV Blacks." Journalism Quarterly, 49:1, Spring 1972, 5-14.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Respondents were asked to "Strongly Agree" (1) - "Strongly Disagree" (5) with the statement: "There is not much I can do about most of the important problems that we face today." This item was taken from: Middleton, Russell. "Alienation, Race, and Education," The American Sociological Review, Vol. 28 (December, 1963), pp. 974-977.

[13]Surlin, Stuart H. "Reference Group Theory as a Predictor of Message Source Effects." Unpublished Ph.D. Dissertation, Department of Communication, Michigan State University, 1974.

Table #1

Three-way ANOVA Using Social Class, Race and Region to Predict "Sanford and Son" Reveals Real Behavior
(N = 503)

Mean Scores (Range 1-5, 1 = Strongly Agree) Overall = 2.72

Social Class	Race	Region
Low = 2.67	Black = 2.62	Chicago = 2.66
Middle = 2.75	White = 2.81	Atlanta = 2.77

Source of Variance	df	ms	F	P
Main Effects:				
Social Class	1	.85	.73	.39
Race	1	4.01	3.44	.06
Region	1	1.34	1.15	.28
Interactions:				
Social Class X Race	1	1.91	1.64	.20
Social Class X Region	1	17.10	14.76	<.001
Race X Region	1	5.17	4.45	.04
Social Class X Race X Region	1	15.19	13.06	<.001
Error	495	1.16		

Higher Order
Interaction Mean Scores

n		$\bar{X}$
(73)	Low Class, Black Atlantans	- 2.79
(51)	Low Class, White Chicagoans	- 3.12
(115)	Middle Class, Black Atlantans	- 2.77
(49)	Middle Class, White Chicagoans	- 2.59
(59)	Low Class, Black Chicagoans	- 2.49
(30)	Low Class, White Atlantans	- 2.27
(60)	Middle Class, Black Chicagoans	- 2.42
(66)	Middle Class, White Atlantans	- 3.25

Table #2

Three-way ANOVA Using Social Class, Race, and Region to Predict "All in the Family" Reveals Real Behavior
(N = 503)

Mean Scores (Range 1-5, 1 = Strongly Agree) Overall = 2.62

Social Class	Race	Region
Low = 2.66	Black = 2.55	Chicago = 2.55
Middle = 2.58	White = 2.69	Atlanta = 2.69

Source of Variance	df	ms	F	P
Main Effects:				
Social Class	1	.78	.70	.40
Race	1	1.91	1.72	.19
Region	1	2.18	1.97	.16
Interactions:				
Social Class X Race	1	3.40	3.07	.08
Social Class X Region	1	3.28	2.96	.08
Race X Region	1	.58	.52	.47
Social Class X Race X Region	1	7.08	6.38	.01
Error	495	1.10		

Higher Order
Interaction Mean Scores

(73) Low Class, Black Atlantans - 2.83
(51) Low Class, White Chicagoans - 2.82

(115) Middle Class, Black Atlantans - 2.49
(49) Middle Class, White Chicagoans - 2.48

(59) Low Class, Black Chicagoans - 2.54
(30) Low Class, White Atlantans - 2.46

(60) Middle Class, Black Chicagoans - 2.36
(66) Middle Class, White Atlantans - 2.98

Table #3

Three-way ANOVA Using Social Class, Race, and Region to Predict "Sanford and Son" Shows How Blacks Feel About Whites

(N = 503)

Mean Scores (Range 1-5, 1 = Strongly Agree) Overall = 3.09

Social Class	Race	Region
Low = 3.04	Black = 3.22	Chicago = 3.11
Middle = 3.12	White = 2.94	Atlanta = 3.06

Source of Variance	df	ms	F	P
Main Effects:				
Social Class	1	.67	.63	.43
Race	1	8.61	8.12	<.001
Region	1	.26	.25	.62
Interactions:				
Social Class X Race	1	1.24	1.18	.28
Social Class X Region	1	.03	.03	.86
Race X Region	1	9.75	9.19	<.001
Social Class X Race X Region	1	.74	.70	.40
Error	495	1.06		

Higher Order Interaction Mean Scores

n		$\bar{X}$
(73)	Low Class, Black Atlantans	- 3.40
(51)	Low Class, White Chicagoans	- 3.08
(115)	Middle Class, Black Atlantans	- 3.30
(49)	Middle Class, White Chicagoans	- 3.16
(59)	Low Class, Black Chicagoans	- 3.08
(30)	Low Class, White Atlantans	- 2.63
(60)	Middle Class, Black Chicagoans	- 3.12
(66)	Middle Class, White Atlantans	- 2.92

Table #4

Three-way ANOVA Using Social Class, Race, and Region to Predict "All in the Family" Shows How Whites Feel About Blacks

(N = 503)

Mean Scores (Range 1-5, 1 = Strongly Agree) Overall = 3.05

Social Class	Race	Region
Low = 3.05	Black = 3.04	Chicago = 2.99
Middle = 3.05	White = 3.06	Atlanta 3.11

Source of Variance	df	ms	F	P
Main Effects:				
Social Class	1	.00	.00	.95
Race	1	.02	.02	.88
Region	1	1.48	1.39	.24
Interactions:				
Social Class X Race	1	.18	.16	.68
Social Class X Region	1	1.64	1.54	.22
Race X Region	1	3.90	3.65	.06
Social Class X Race X Region	1	5.75	5.38	.02
Error	495	1.07		

Higher Order Interaction Mean Scores

n		$\bar{X}$
(73)	Low Class, Black Atlantans	- 3.27
(51)	Low Class, White Chicagoans	- 3.25
(115)	Middle Class, Black Atlantans	- 3.12
(49)	Middle Class, White Chicagoans	- 2.93
(59)	Low Class, Black Chicagoans	- 2.86
(30)	Low Class, White Atlantans	- 2.83
(60)	Middle Class, Black Chicagoans	- 2.92
(66)	Middle Class, White Atlantans	- 3.21

Table #5

Three-way ANOVA Using Social Class, Race, and Region to Predict that Archie and Edith Present a Proper Husband-Wife Model

(N = 503)

Mean Scores (Range 1-5, 1 = Strongly Agree) Overall = 3.60

Social Class	Race	Region
Low = 3.47	Black = 3.38	Chicago = 3.59
Middle = 3.71	White = 3.81	Atlanta = 3.60

Source of Variance	df	ms	F	P
Main Effects:				
Social Class	1	6.40	5.30	.02
Race	1	21.00	17.41	<.001
Region	1	.02	.02	.90
Interactions:				
Social Class X Race	1	1.87	1.55	.21
Social Class X Region	1	17.58	14.57	<.001
Race X Region	1	5.85	4.85	.03
Social Class X Race X Region	1	3.37	2.80	.09
Error	495	1.20		

Higher Order Interaction Mean Scores

n		$\bar{X}$
(73)	Low Class, Black Atlantans	- 3.20
(51)	Low Class, White Chicagoans	- 4.16
(115)	Middle Class, Black Atlantans	- 3.80
(49)	Middle Class, White Chicagoans	- 3.69
(59)	Low Class, Black Chicagoans	- 3.19
(30)	Low Class, White Atlantans	- 3.37
(60)	Middle Class, Black Chicagoans	- 3.33
(66)	Middle Class, White Atlantans	- 4.05

Table #6

Three-way ANOVA Using Social Class, Race, and Region to Predict that Mike and Gloria Present a Proper Husband-Wife Model
(N = 503)

Mean Scores (1-5, 1 = Strongly Agree) Overall = 2.77

Social Class	Race	Region
Low = 2.83	Black = 2.72	Chicago = 2.75
Middle = 2.70	White = 2.81	Atlanta = 2.78

Source of Variance	df	ms	F	P
Main Effects:				
Social Class	1	1.78	1.81	.18
Race	1	.81	.81	.37
Region	1	.08	.08	.77
Interactions:				
Social Class X Race	1	1.05	1.06	.30
Social Class X Region	1	.63	.63	.42
Race X Region	1	9.92	10.04	<.001
Social Class X Race X Region	1	6.23	6.31	.01
Error	495	.99		

Higher Order
Interaction Mean Scores

(73) Low Class, Black Atlantans - 3.08
(51) Low Class, White Chicagoans - 3.11

(115) Middle Class, Black Atlantans - 2.69
(49) Middle Class, White Chicagoans - 2.77

(59) Low Class, Black Chicagoans - 2.59
(30) Low Class, White Atlantans - 2.53

(60) Middle Class, Black Chicagoans - 2.53
(66) Middle Class, White Atlantans - 2.81

Table #7

Three-way ANOVA Using Social Class, Race, and Region to Predict "Powerlessness" Dimension of Alienation

(N = 503)

Mean Scores (Range 1-5, 1 = Strongly Agree) Overall = 2.70

Social Class	Race	Region
Low = 2.68	Black = 2.63	Chicago = 2.65
Middle = 2.71	White = 2.76	Atlanta = 2.75

Source of Variance	df	ms	F	P
Main Effects:				
Social Class	1	.18	.13	.71
Race	1	1.91	1.46	.23
Region	1	.90	.68	.41
Interactions:				
Social Class X Race	1	.03	.02	.88
Social Class X Region	1	.99	.76	.38
Race X Region	1	7.18	5.47	.02
Social Class X Race X Region	1	2.43	1.85	.17
Error	495	1.31		

Race X Region Interaction Mean Scores:

n		$\bar{X}$
(188)	Black Atlantans	- 2.80
(100)	White Chicagoans	- 2.84
(119)	Black Chicagoans	- 2.46
(99)	White Atlantans	- 2.68

Table #8

One-way Analyses of Covariance of Three Interaction Subgroups with "Powerlessness" as Covariant (N = 377)

Dependent Variable:	Homogeneity of Regression:			Analysis of Covariance of Adjusted Group Means:		
	df	ms	F	df	ms	F
"Sanford and Son" Reveals Real Behavior	2 371	1.20 1.16	1.03	2 373	5.53 1.17	4.74**
"All in the Family" Reveals Real Behavior	2 371	.89 1.11	.80	2 373	4.01 1.11	3.62*
"Sanford and Son" Shows How Blacks feel about Whites	2 371	.55 1.10	.50	2 373	3.24 1.10	2.95
"All in the Family" Shows How Whites feel about Blacks	2 371	.83 1.09	.76	2 373	3.78 1.08	3.48*
Archie and Edith Present a Proper Husband-Wife Model	2 371	.33 1.33	.25	2 373	6.07 1.32	4.58*
Mike and Gloria Present a Proper Husband-Wife Model	2 371	6.59 .94	7.03**	2 373	6.36 .97	6.56**

** $p < .01$
* $p < .05$